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AUTHOR Piland, William E.
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ABSTRACT

Alternative schools in public school districts and private institutions offer a choice of more than one educational option to students. These schools usually have some of the following characteristics: voluntary participation, distinctiveness, nonexclusiveness, comprehensive objectives, and a supportive learning environment. Instructional styles include Montessori, open classroom, behavior modification, and individualized instruction; their curriculums offer programs such as environmental education, performing arts, international studies, and career education. Clients served by alternative schools include students who are dropouts, come from multicultural backgrounds, are highly motivated, or are pregnant. Although they may offer innovative types of education, alternative schools must also provide their students with the basics and protect them from being penalized for attending such a program. In Illinois, the role of alternative schools in employment and training efforts is limited; however, these schools, because they are typically small and flexible, could offer more employment-related training for their students. Employer surveys have suggested competencies related to employment and training needs that alternative schools should provide (list included in report). The balance of the report suggests ways to work with alternative schools to prepare students for work, and profiles the efforts of five alternative high schools throughout Illinois. (KC)

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Illinois Alternative Schools And The Employment And Training Community

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Project Staff
Frank G. Adams, Director
Jeanette Y. Klehm, Project Assistant
Kathy Brey, Secretary

Report Written By
William E. Piland, Ph.D.
Illinois State University
Normal, Illinois

Project Advisory Committee

Roger L. Barry
Lakeland College
Mattoon, Illinois

Jerome Bradley
Lewis and Clark College
Godfrey, Illinois

Nancy Bross
Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Illinois

Archie Criglar
Department of Commerce and Community Affairs
Springfield, Illinois

Donald Full
Illinois State Board of Education
Springfield, Illinois

Ralph Goodman
Illinois State Board of Education
Springfield, Illinois

Al Green
Richland Community College
Decatur, Illinois

William Grove
Department of Adult Vocational and Technical Education
Springfield, Illinois

Toni Harris
Illinois Board of Higher Education
Springfield, Illinois

Roslyn Jackson
Department of Commerce and Community Affairs
Springfield, Illinois

David Murphy
Rockford Consortium CETA - Private Industry Council
Rockford, Illinois

H.J. Pfeiffer
Lawrence Adult Center
Springfield, Illinois

Chris Reitz
Lake County CETA Program
Waukegan, Illinois

John Roark
Macon County CETA Services
Decatur, Illinois

Al Sherline
Adult Education Center
Mattoon, Illinois

John Wilson
Lake County CETA - Private Industry Council
Waukegan, Illinois

Janet York
Department of Commerce and Community Affairs
Springfield, Illinois

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College of Lake County
19351 West Washington Street, Grayslake, Illinois 60030 (312) 223-6601

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DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS IN ILLINOIS

The Alternative School - What Is It?

A great deal of confusion revolves around the concept of the alternative school. An alternative school is an educational program in public school districts or sponsored by private institutions which offers a choice of more than one educational option to students (NSBA, 1974). Although many alternative schools fall short of meeting this definition, it still represents the ideal description of an alternative education program in Illinois at the present time. Alternative schools typically exhibit the following characteristics (NSPRA, 1972):

Voluntary Participation - Students and teachers choose to participate in the school.

Distinctiveness - Each alternative school is different from the conventional school.

Nonexclusiveness - The school is open to all students on a voluntary basis.

Comprehensive Objectives - A set of comprehensive objectives equivalent to those of conventional schools.

Learning Environment - A supportive learning environment which relates to student learning styles.

While there is no agreement on how to classify alternative schools, some ideas which have been used include

Instructional Styles - Montessori schools, open schools, behavior modification schools, individualized continuous progress schools

Curricula - environmental schools, performing arts schools, career centers, centers for international studies

Clients - dropouts, multicultural, highly motivated, pregnant

Facilities - schools-without-walls, learning centers, educational parks

Administrative Structure - school-within-a-school, satellite school, mini-schools

Alternative schools come in many sizes and shapes and with varying objectives and philosophies. That students or parents have a choice in selecting an educational program is basic to all. Alternative schools recognize that different students may do better in different types of schools and, therefore, stress variety rather than uniformity. They are organized in many different ways with various kinds of student bodies but all involve a total educational program. They occur at any educational level, elementary or secondary, though there has been more effort thus far to establish alternatives for high school students, who are more vocal than elementary age youngsters in their complaints about education-as-usual.

Many alternative schools are innovative and open but some are traditional and formal. To provide true alternatives, this choice within the system must exist. Most alternative schools are small but there are no size limitations. Many are physically separate from other schools but some share a large school building with other, administratively independent, alternative programs. Many are not confined to a single building and consider an entire city their schoolhouse (Deal and Nolan, 1978).

Some alternative schools depend heavily upon involvement of students, parents, and volunteer instructors in the community.

Students and teachers often play a large role in making decisions usually reserved entirely for administrators in other schools. Through such involvement and, more importantly, by offering basic options, alternative schools give students a greater chance to chart their own educational courses.

The Range Of Alternatives: Secondary Level

The kinds of alternative programs which can be developed are limited only by a school system's needs and willingness to meet those needs. Without being exhaustive, here are the best known types of alternative secondary schools:

> Schools-without-walls where students work and study in museums, businesses, hospitals, and other places in the community and learn that learning is not limited to a school building.
>
> Mini-schools or schools-within-schools which can subdivide huge high schools of 3,000 or more students into small, personal units of, for example, 150 students and six teachers who may focus their studies around a special interest such as aviation, art, or anthropology.
>
> Dropout centers where school dropouts can get the basic education and vocational skills they missed in regular schools. With about 30% of the nation's students leaving school before graduation, many communities have such a center.
>
> Schools for students with special problems, such as academic failure, disruptiveness, or pregnancy, who, without such special programs, would probably leave or be forced out of school.
>
> Open schools for capable students who are frustrated by typical, traditionally organized schools. Individidualized study and self-direction are stressed but, unlike schools-without-walls, the program is centered in one building.

Schools For Dropouts

When students decide to drop out of school, they are selecting an alternative available to them upon reaching age 16. It often is not much of a choice, as they merely go from failure in school to failure on the street. This is why many dropouts will quickly grasp the second chance offered by an alternative school if they are shown that it won't just mean a rerun of their former failure.

Most dropouts have more than academic problems. To succeed, an alternative school is frequently equipped to offer individual guidance and counseling. These schools also make certain that the time a student spends on the job[1] not only provides needed income but also needed incentive for further learning. Because every dropout has a history of school failure, alternative schools quickly proclaim to the returnee that "this is a new ball game." And those who have studied alternative schools say that alternative schools often are more successful if they are housed in buildings without any resemblance to typical schools. The staff abandons authoritarian, impersonal teaching so the dropout is not encouraged to drop out again (Ignas and Corsini, 1979).

Alternative schools provide no guarantee of educational excellence. Like traditional schools, they are only as good as the people in them; and, they are subject to more potential problems than the typical school, many of whose faults may go generally unnoticed because they have been present too long.

---

[1]Some schools for dropouts have a work experience component as part of their program. The successful schools appear to have a supervised work experience component as part of their educational program.

Those experienced in setting up and operating an alternative school say they must

> Be certain its students are acquiring the hard, basic skills.
>
> Provide efficient direction within a democratic community.
>
> Hire administrators and teachers who realize they will serve somewhat different functions than they did in traditional schools.
>
> Keep from being dependent on a few people - a danger in small, new schools.
>
> Know what other alternative schools are doing.
>
> Provide assurances that graduates seeking admissions to college won't be penalized for being part of an unconventional program.
>
> Overcome administrative obstacles to innovation.
>
> Protect the school from attacks, particularly from other educators.
>
> Tell the school's story honestly.
>
> Remain true to public education's democratic, nondiscriminatory tradition.
>
> Avoid an inflated ego (Morgan, 1981).

Visitations to alternative schools in Illinois and discussions with staff associated with those schools (see the Visition Report Section) indicate some alternative schools in the state do correspond to most of the items on this list. However, most alternative programs outside of the Chicago metropolitan area are small in size. They maintain a limited number of students and because of funding constraints may only operate for a few years. The alternative program aimed toward potential dropouts in Paris, Illinois is one such school.

Other Alternative Type Programs in Illinois

Three special groups of programs need to be mentioned separately.

First, the Chicago Board of Education runs a variety of options. Included are some of the real old-timers of alternative education such as the Disney Magnet School, the Faragut Outposts, and, of course, the Metro High School (Chicago Public High School for Metropolitan Studies.) Under its Access to Excellence Program, the Chicago Board of Education has tried to open doors to choice to all students. For further information on the many public options in Chicago, contact the Office of Information, 228 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601, (312) 641-8300.

Also, located in Chicago is the nation's largest collection of private alternatives. The Alternative Schools Network links over forty private schools in a mutual support network. Through this process, many small, neighborhood based programs have been able to attain great stability over five to ten years. These are often broad programs providing important services to the community. They exemplify the ideal of interagency cooperation about which many schools only talk. For further information, contact the Alternative Schools Network, 1105 West Lawrence, Chicago, Illinois 60640, (312) 728-4030.

Finally, Illinois is the home of one of the most interesting developments in alternative education. Ombudsman has been in business since 1975 and is currently operating eight programs.

It is unique in two ways. First, it is based on programmed instruction using teaching machines and computers. Second, it is a private, profit-making corporation which contracts with school districts to serve students the districts are unable or unwilling to serve. For further information, contact Lori Sweeney or Jim Boyle at 1585 North Milwaukee Avenue, Suite 9, Libertyville, Illinois 60048, (312) 367-6383.

Illinois has a relatively large number of alternative schools located throughout the state (CNFE-Michigan State University, 1975). There are, also, many diverse types of alternative educational programs offered in both public and private institutions. The description of alternative schools in Illinois which follows was submitted to the State legislature in 1977 and illustrates this diversity:

> An alternative education program is any full service program which meets at least all of the objectives and requirements of a traditional school of the same developmental level, but which differs from the traditional program in environment, structure, and/or learning styles.
>
> While providing a complete basic education program, many alternative schools may also have special functions and constituencies. An alternative education program may not, in and of itself, be a full service program if it serves a special curricular function within a full service program. Alternative schools may be housed within the traditional school, in separate facilities from the traditional school or in shared facilities. They must have a voluntary or open enrollment policy.
>
> Public alternative education programs serve to ensure that every young person may find a path to the educational goals of the community. Programs must focus on what they can offer the student, not on what problems the student has had in the past. (Illinois Commission on Truancy and Alternative Education, 1979)

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY IN ILLINOIS

Alternative Schools And Employment And Training

In Illinois, alternative schools do have a role in the state's employment and training efforts (Ed 192-067). The role is, however, a limited one when viewed from a statewide perspective. The rationale for this judgement is tied to the diversity among the alternative schools within the state. Some alternative programs simply mirror academic subjects and requirements in a specific secondary school district. Others are heavily involved in preparation for the GED. Still others are comprehensive institutions doing the aforementioned functions along with the teaching of job preparation and vocational skills. Many of these alternative schools also integrate a work experience component into their program (see the Visitation Report Section).

Overall Strengths

One of the appeals alternative schools have for employment and training needs is they are typically smaller and less bureaucratic than the traditional, comprehensive secondary school (Solo, 1980). They tend to be flexible in terms of their operations and, in many cases, their curricula. As a whole, they appear able to adjust quickly and might be capable of reacting to the employment and training community's needs in a relatively short time span. Related to this flexibility is the strong emphasis placed on individualized instruction in many alternative programs (Fantini, 1976). A large proportion of these schools are committed to student's individual needs. Hence, they conduct smaller than average classes and, in some cases, develop

individual learning programs for each student, predicated upon the student's unique needs. In these situations, the individualized program frequently includes a work experience component. Some alternative schools are quite involved in helping a student obtain employment while others leave it up to the student to secure a job. Most of the work experience program components include the development of a training plan involving the student, the school, and the employer. The training plan guides the student's learning experiences while in the work setting attempting to insure that the student receives a variety of important job related experiences.

Another strength of alternative schools, in general, is that they devote time and attention to the students' affective learning (Roberts, 1975). That is, the schools work on attitudes, behavior, and personal and social habits. For example, teachers stress such concepts as punctuality, responsibility, conformity, and self-initiative. Many of these types of skills are, of course, closely related to success on the job. These affective areas are frequently emphasized because many alternative school students have had behavior and attitude problems in the traditional secondary school setting. To avoid a carry-over of these problems into the work setting, teachers in alternative programs work with students in improving their job preparation skills. Closely associated with an emphasis on affective learning in some alternative schools is a commitment to small group and personal counseling. The counseling often reinforces and further develops students' life and job survival

skills. These skills, again, are often important for success on a job and are especially important to many alternative school students since these students have often had problems and failure in a traditional organization, such as a secondary school.

Overall Weaknesses

Because alternative schools are commonly small, nonbureaucratic institutions, they also exhibit some weaknesses associated with the very nature of their type of organization. From a statewide point of view, one weakness related to employment and training needs is the very diversity of alternative schools. Some local communities do not have any alternative schools while others have ones with a very limited, special function type of program. And in some communities, an alternative school exists with a comprehensive program. An employment and training agency would probably be able to establish a working relationship with the school which has a comprehensive program rather easily. In the other situation, it would be impossible or at least difficult to establish such a relationship.

Also, because alternative schools typically are small operations enrolling a limited number of students, they frequently are restricted by limited facilities and staff (Ed 187-241). Their formal curricula arelimited frequently by the number of teachers in the programs and the physical facilities in which the programs are offered. Some alternative schools are literally storefront operations with little space and equipment. Other alternative programs operated in a school building are

limited to a few rooms and because of scheduling and time conflicts have reduced or limited access to other facilities within the building. Vocational training, as such, is nonexistent or very limited in these situation.

Finally, there is no standard pattern for the administration and funding of alternative programs in the state. This variety makes it difficult for employment and training agencies to initiate contact with those administrators who have the authority and responsibility for decision making. For example, alternative schools in Illinois could be administered by a regional superintendent, a unit or secondary district superintendent, a group of superintendents within a county or other geographical area, or by a building principal. There other administrative configurations in some instances. The funding for an alternative school program may consist of tuition (paid by a sponsoring agency or school district) or direct funds from the budget of a school district or districts. In most instances, there is no direct funding from the state or a local tax levy to the alternative school. Therefore, alternative programs are frequently competing for funds as an adjunct rather than a primary program. In tough economic times, the alternative school has a difficult task in securing adequate operational funds.

The lack of a standard administative pattern and an indirect funding system cause problems for employment and training agencies attempting to work with alternative schools. It is difficult to know whom to contact regarding the existence and

purposes of a local alternative program. It is likewise difficult to identify administrators who have authority to commit the program to cooperative working arrangements. The indirect funding pattern makes many smaller alternative schools tentative ones which may not be viewed as permanent operations..

SPECIFIC USES OF ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS BY EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING AGENCIES IN ILLINOIS

Specific Alternative School Uses

Earlier it was indicated that alternative schools in Illinois had a limited role in the state's employment and training efforts. Generally, alternative programs serve youth between the ages of 16 and 21 who have not completed a high school education. Since this group is an important one in terms of employment and training needs, the employment and training community should attempt to work with existing alternative schools in serving these youth. While most alternative programs are strong in the basic academic areas, they are weak in specific vocational training areas (Ed 187-241). In most alternative schools, particularly small ones located in rural areas, there is a lack of facilities, equipment, and staff in the vocational programs area (see the Visitation Report Section). Area vocational centers, comprehensive high schools and community colleges are better equipped to provide specific vocational training at the job entry skill level. Nevertheless, alternative programs can and do offer educational experiences which can help unemployed and underemployed youth beyond the academic subjects or GED preparation. The following pages in this section outline areas which can be included in the educational programming of alternative schools.

These areas, outlined in this section, serve as a starting point for possible employment and training related experiences which can be taught in an alternative school setting. Some alternative schools (for example, Futures Unlimited in Decatur) routinely teach many of these areas as a part of their

educational program. Most alternative schools in Illinois, however, do not routinely offer employment related educational experiences in their programs. Their programs tend to be primarily academic skills oriented.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL AREAS/CATEGORIES RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS*

1. VERBAL SKILLS
   - Verbal Communication
   - Reading
   - Accuracy
   - Spelling
   - Telephone Communication
   - Written Communication
   - Recording Information

2. LANGUAGE SKILLS
   - Listening
   - Grammatical Expression
   - Generalizing
   - Technical Vocabulary
   - Nonverbal Expression

3. QUANTITIVE/NUMERICAL SKILLS
   - Counting and Recording
   - General Numerical Usage
   - Addition/Subtraction
   - Multiplication/Division
   - Money

4. INFORMATIONAL SKILLS
   - Follow Verbal Instructions
   - Follow Written Instructions
   - Attentiveness
   - Retention
   - Perseverance
   - Sequence
   - Planning Ability
   - Mechanical Ability

5. PERCEPTUAL SKILLS
   - Form Discrimination
   - Form Perception
   - Space Perception
   - Color Perception
   - Touch Discrimination
   - Auditory Discrimination
   - Olfactory Discrimination

6. SOCIAL SKILLS
   - Punctuality
   - Safety
   - Cooperativeness
   - Attentiveness/Follow Instructions
   - Appropriate Behavior
   - Responsibility
   - Conformity
   - Loyalty
   - Appearance
   - Social Acceptance
   - Self Initiation

7. JOB SEEKING SKILLS
   - Career Planning
   - Sources of Employment Information
   - Job Categories of Interest
   - Employment Requirements
   - Job Preparedness/Self Placement

8. WORK EXPERIENCE SKILLS
   - Regularity of Attendance
   - Punctuality
   - Receptiveness to Supervision
   - Ability to Follow Instructions
   - Timeliness of Task Completion
   - Cooperation with Supervisor
   - Cooperation with Co-Workers

*These categories are derived from the following sources:

1. Employer survey completed by Decatur Regional Superintendent's Office, 1980.
2 ED 192-067 An Alternative Vocational Training Model, 1981.
3. ED 187-233 Forum for Cooperative Programs with Business and Community, 1980.
4. ED 210-550 Teaching Affective Work Competencies to Alternative High School Students: The Testing of Instructional Strategy, 1981.

AREA 1 - VERBAL SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Verbal Communication	Uses words effectively when asking or responding to questions
Reading	Reads with comprehension at the 5th grade level or above
Accuracy	Checks, when necessary, to be sure that task was performed accurately
Spelling	Spells common words accurately
Telephone Communication	Uses the telephone to obtain information
Written Communication	Writes a series of sentences on a given subject
Recording Information	Maintains accurate records of performance or production

AREA 2 - LANGUAGE SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Listening	Listens attentively and for the purpose of remembering when others are talking
Grammatical Expression	Uses appropriate grammatical expressions in sentence form
Generalizing	Draws conclusions, makes accurate assumptions from receptive language
Technical Vocabulary	Recognizes and comprehends technical vocabulary words at a level sufficient for educational and social communication
Nonverbal Expression	Reacts to voice tone, inflection, facial expression, choice of words and gestures, and recognizes emotions and feelings.

AREA 3 - QUANTITATIVE/NUMERICAL SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Counting and Recording	Reads, counts, and/or records numerical information accurately
General Numerical Usage	Recognizes and affixes meaning to zip codes, social security numbers, street addresses, etc
Addition/Subtraction	Performs simple addition and subtraction computations accurately
Multiplication/Division	Performs simple multiplication and division computations accurately
Money	Recognizes common denominations of coins and bills and can make change accurately
Fractions/Decimals	Reads, interprets, and uses common fractions, e.g., 1/3, 1/4, and 1/2
Measurement	Performs or interprets the following measurements correctly and accurately: distance/size, weight/volume/balance, liquids/solids, time, temperature/pressure/humidity, torque, electrical units, vertical/horizontal, and degrees of a circle (angularity)

AREA 4 - INFORMATIONAL SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Follow Verbal Instructions	Understands spoken instructions containing more than one idea
Follow Written Instructions	Reads and follows written instructions as communicated by signs, safety labels, and procedure manuals
Attentiveness	Concentrates on a task and is not easily distracted
Retention	Remembers critical information such as names and procedures
Perseverance	Sees the task through to completion
Sequence	Processes information accurately for determining appropriate order or sequence
Planning Ability	Plans ahead for completion of a task
Mechanical Ability	Demonstrates a working knowledge of mechanical principles, e.g., levers, inertia, and motion

AREA 5 - PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Form Discrimination	Recognizes differences between a variety of forms (two dimensional), solid shapes, sizes, and textures
Form Perception	Sees details of objects, graphs, pictures, and can compare differences in size and shape
Space Perception	Recognizes forms and objects in their spatial relationships accurately
Color Perception	Recognizes primary colors, sees differences and similarities between shades
Touch Discrimination	Determines size, shape, temperature, moisture content, or texture by means of touch
Auditory Discrimination	Makes fine distinction from sound cues and recognizes normal and abnormal sounds
Olfactory Discrimination	Differentiates a variety of smells

AREA 6 - SOCIAL SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Punctuality	Is on time regularly for activities and events; accepts responsibility for tardiness
Safety	Demonstrates a concern for and takes appropriate action to maintain safe conditions
Cooperativeness	Cooperates with peers and others for the accomplishment of a group task
Attentiveness/ Follow Instructions	Listens to directions; follows instructions; attends to task as required; works at consistent rate when unsupervised
Appropriate Behavior	Exhibits suitable gestures, verbalization, actions, mannerisms
Responsibility	Assumes and carries out tasks in a dependable manner
Conformity	Accepts rules and regulations whether or not he/she agrees with them
Loyalty	Never or rarely complains about peers, teachers, others, or tasks
Appearance	Dresses appropriately for the situation; is well groomed
Social Acceptance	Likes and is sought out by peers; considered dependable by peers and others
Self Initiation	Initates work on task promptly and without the urging of others

AREA 7 - JOB SEEKING SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Career Planning	Develop a decision making model to help select a definite career path; defining career; reviewing self awareness; exploring selected jobs by determining who does the work, and when they do it, how they do it, and the supply and demand for the jobs; and starting a decision making matrix
Sources of Employment Information	List contacts from newspapers, personal contacts (relatives, friends, politicians, organizational peers), unemployment offices, the Job Service, libraries (journals), local businesses, position vacancy lists, Chamber of Commerce registers (social service, industrial), telephone books, city directories, Dunn & Bradstreet
Job Categories of Interest	Completely list personal skills, experience, education, personal qualities, and references
Employment Requirements	Be able to list skills and conditions of employment needed in the occupation
Job Preparedness/ Self Placement	Develop skills necessary to apply and intereview for a job by developing a summary listing important educational experiences, researching and identifying firms with job openings, listing principles of a resume, developing a cover letter, completing a job application, preparing for an interview, practicing interviewing skills, and developing a procedure for following up the interview

AREA 8 - WORK EXPERIENCE SKILLS

SKILL	OBJECTIVE
Regularity of Attendance	Works on days when scheduled and does not make false excuses
Punctuality	Reports to work on time and conforms to rules covering time for breaks and lunch
Receptiveness to Supervision	Follows orders without exhibiting undesirable behavior
Ability to Follow Instructions	Performs tasks correctly and efficiently, follows through on skill
Timeliness of Task Completion	Completes tasks on time and uses time constructively for work purposes
Cooperation with Supervisor	Demonstrates good working relationship with supervisor and respects supervisor's authority
Cooperation with Co-Workers	Gets along with and respects work of co-workers, helps co-workers when appropriate

WORKING WITH THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS IN ILLINOIS

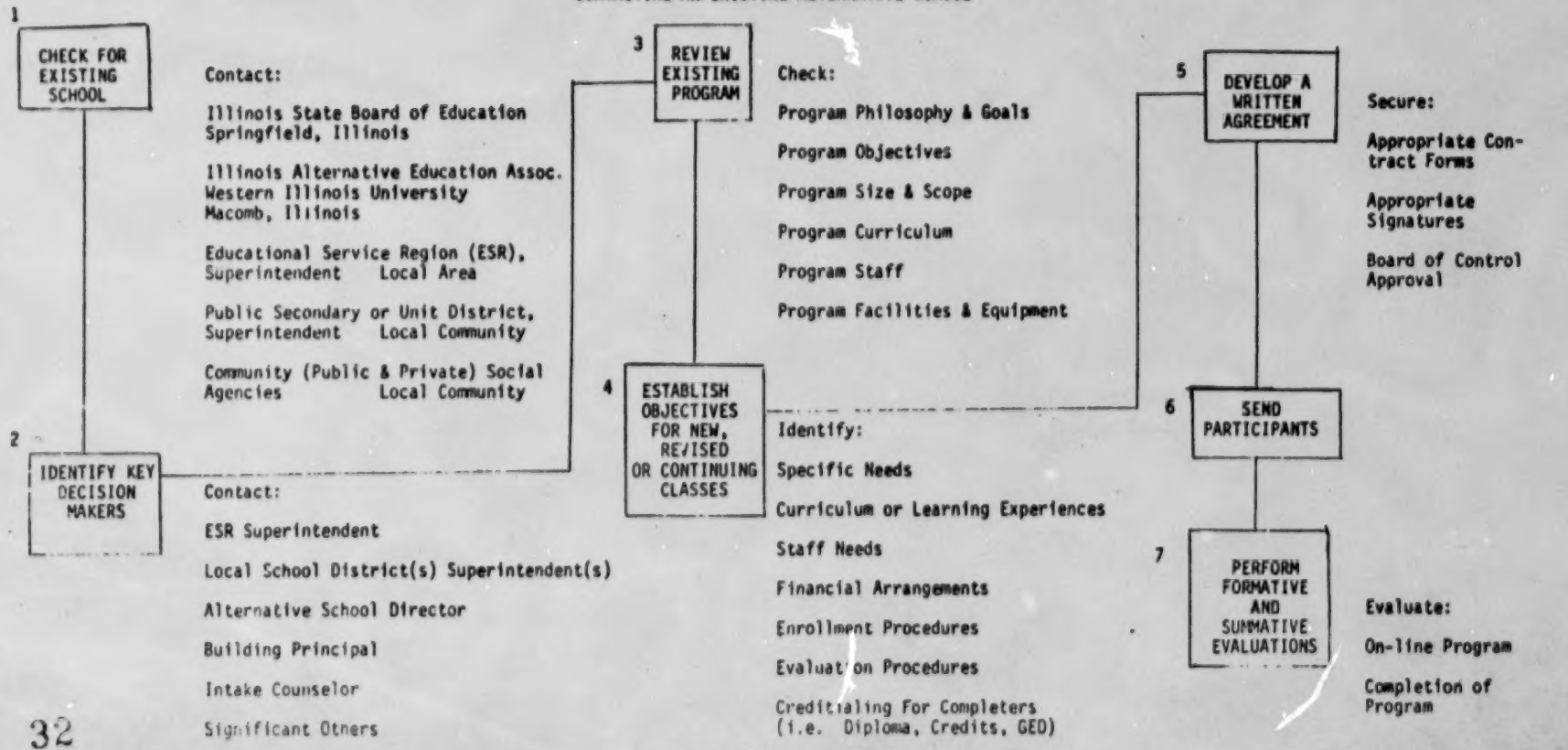
Working With Alternative Schools

Contacting a local alternative school to establish a working relationship may be a difficult task for a representative from the employment and training community. In some parts of the state, there will not be an alternative school in existence. The employment and training representative, in this situation, may want to work with local authorities to try and establish an alternative program (see Schematic 2). Where an alternative school does exist, the task of making contact may also be difficult because of the wide variety of administrative organizations with responsibility for alternative programs. Initial contact points may vary for individual alternative schools throughout the state. Schematic 1 illustrates the various possible ways to make contact with an existing alternative school.

While making contact with an alternative program may be a difficult and frustrating task in some localities, establishing a working relationship with one will be even more arduous. The key to establishing a mutually satisfying relationship is to locate and involve key decision makers who have authority over the alternative school program. In many localities, the decision makers will involve a group of people beyond merely the director of the alternative school. Schematic 3 summarizes some possiblities for developing cooperative arrangements with existing or new alternative schools.

SCHEMATIC 1

CONTACTING AN EXISTING ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL



Contacting An Existing Alternative School

Establishing contact with an existing alternative school may require some perseverance. In some communities, these schools maintain a low public profile. The following agencies or groups may be able to supply information about the existence of a local alternative school:

Illinois State Board of Education
Springfield, Illinois

Illinois Alternative Education Association
Western Illinois University
Stipes Hall
Macomb, Illinois 61455

Educational Service Region Office(s)

Public Secondary or Unit District Schools
in Local Communities

Social Agencies in Local Communities

If an existing alternative school is discovered, working relationships will probably have to be established with many individuals to begin a cooperative arrangement between the school and the employment and training agency in the local community. The following individuals may need to be contacted before an existing program can be used or revised for employment and training purposes.

Superintendent, Educational Service Region Office

Superintendent, Administering District

Director, Alternative School/Program

Building Principal

Curriculum Coordinator, Administering District

Counselor(s)

Teacher(s)

These individuals may take part in establishing a working relationship between the alternative school and the employment and training community.

A review of the current alternative school program will be required. The following factors will need to be considered in the review process.

Program Goal(s)

Program Objective(s)

Program Size and Scope

Admission Requirement(s)

Curricula

Program Staff

Facilities and Equipment

Accreditation Type

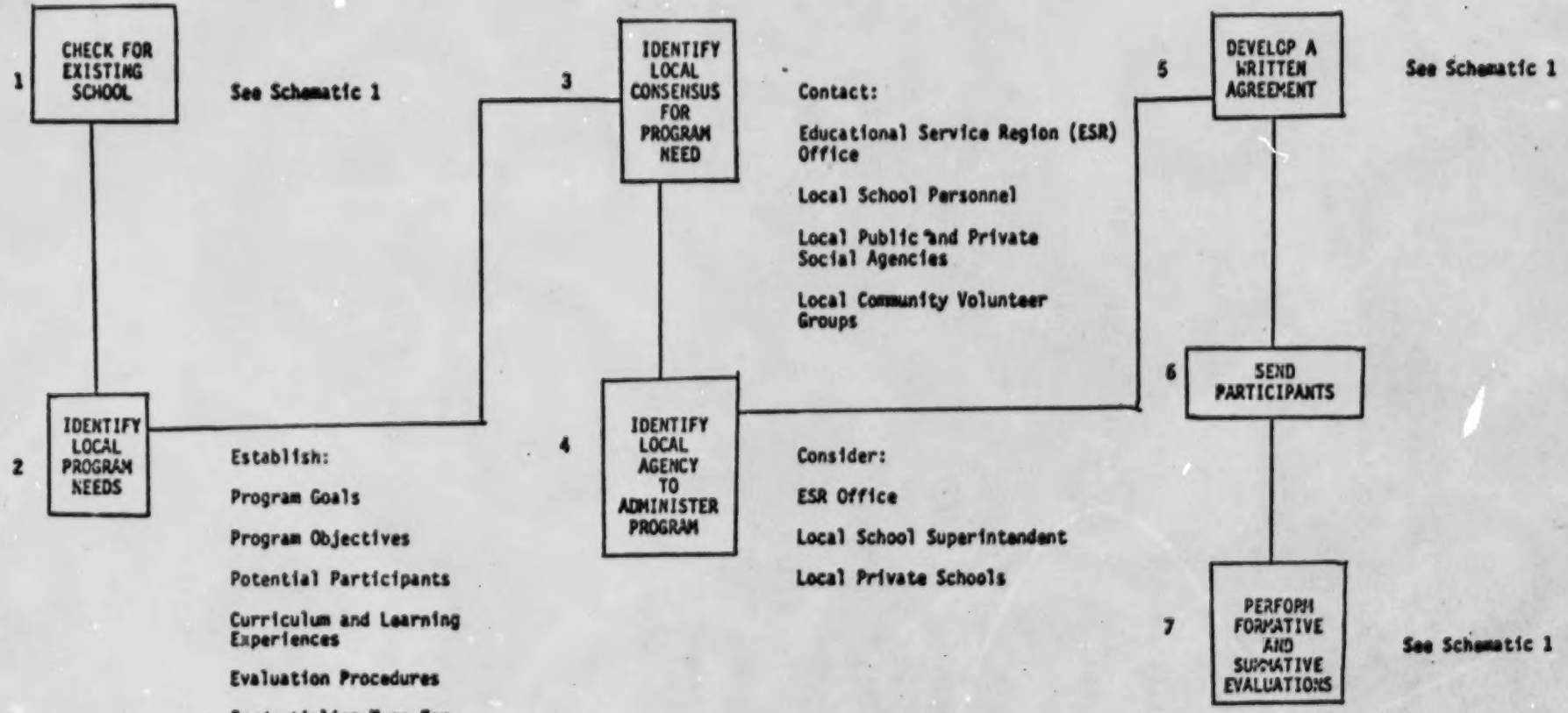
The curriculum, including objectives, competencies, learning experiences and instructional methodology, will need to be closely studied to determine its applicability to employment and training needs. If revision is needed in an existing program, it is probably the curriculum which will be altered.

Establishing An Alternative Program

Creating an alternative program where one does not exist is a sizeable undertaking. A need must be recognized in the local community before people will even begin considering an alternative school. A group, such as an employment and training agency, may serve as a catalyst in identifying the need for such

SCHEMATIC 2

ESTABLISHING AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM



a program. A consensus among members of some of the following groups is helpful in identifying a local need.

Educational Service Region Office

Local School Personnel

Local Public Social Agency(ies)

Local Private Social Agency(ies)

Local Business(es) and Industry(ies)

Local Community Volunteer Group(s)

Once a local need has been established a sponsoring agency must be identified which will administer the program and secure the necessary state approvals for the awarding of credits and/or diplomas. The following agencies are potential sponsors of alternative education programs:

Local Secondary or Unit School Districts

Local Private Schools

Educational Service Region Offices

Multiple Local School Districts

Local Community Colleges

Special Education Districts

The development of a new alternative program may involve some or all of the following tasks:

Contact the Educational Service Region Office for assistance.

Contact area high schools or unit districts to determine willingness to participate.

Contact area community based organizations and social service agencies to ascertain willingness to participate.

Arrange a coalition meeting to begin planning.

Establish accreditation procedures.

Establish curricula and courses to be offered.

Identify instructional methodologies to be used.

Identify a facility to house the program.

Identify a staff for the program.

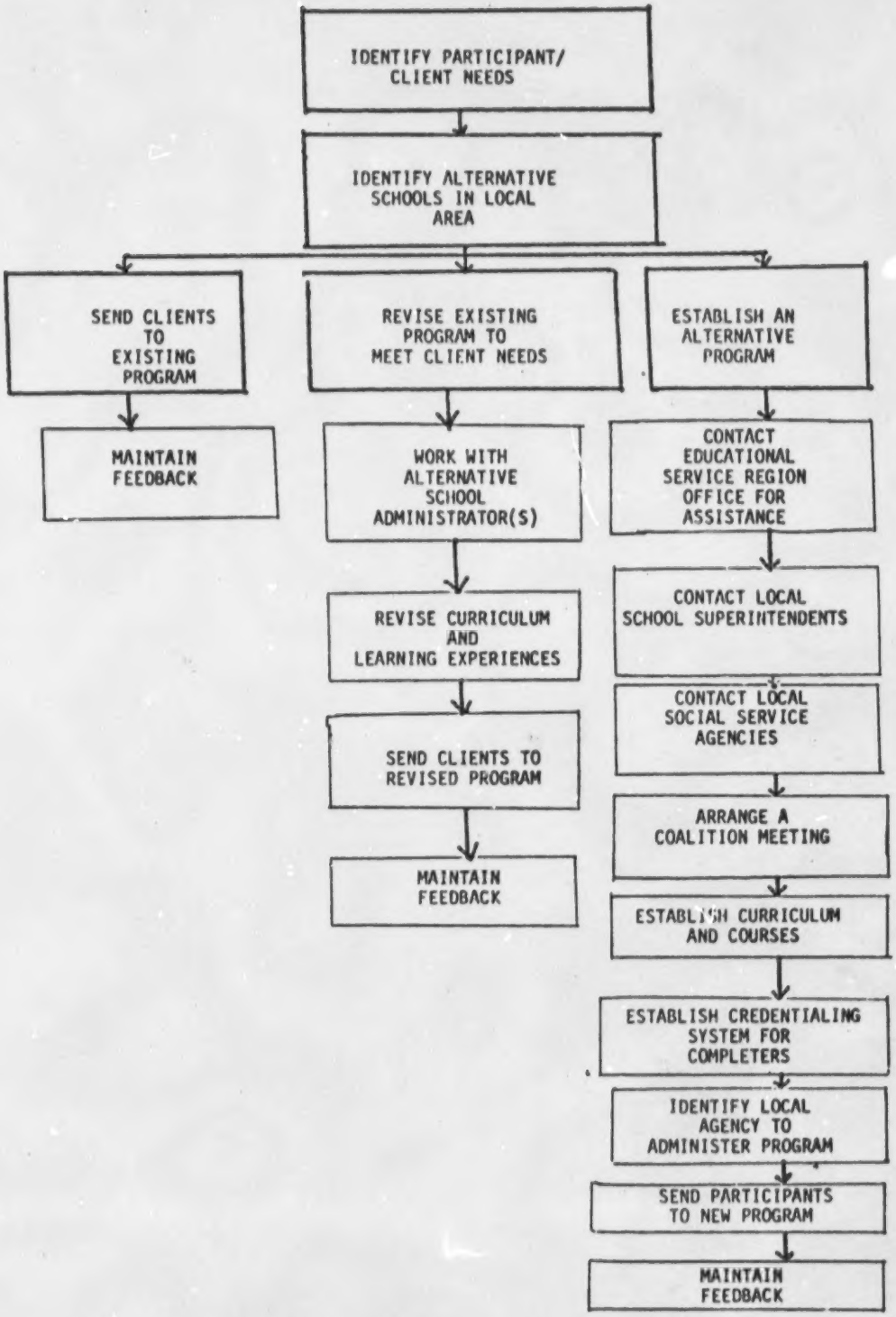
Identify a program evaluation system.

Sign the necessary contracts with the new alternative school.

Once the new alternative program is developed, specific procedures for handling the employment and training agency clients will need to be established with the alternative school personnel. Establishing these specific procedures should be relatively easy since alternative schools tend to be flexible and adaptable.

SCHEMATIC 3

DEVELOPING COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS


IDENTIFY PARTICIPANT/ CLIENT NEEDS
IDENTIFY ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS IN LOCAL AREA
SEND CLIENTS TO EXISTING PROGRAM
REVISE EXISTING PROGRAM TO MEET CLIENT NEEDS
ESTABLISH AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM
MAINTAIN FEEDBACK
WORK WITH ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR(S)
CONTACT EDUCATIONAL SERVICE REGION OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE
REVISE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES
CONTACT LOCAL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS
SEND CLIENTS TO REVISED PROGRAM
CONTACT LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES
MAINTAIN FEEDBACK
ARRANGE A COALITION MEETING
ESTABLISH CURRICULUM AND COURSES
ESTABLISH CREDENTIALING SYSTEM FOR COMPLETERS
IDENTIFY LOCAL AGENCY TO ADMINISTER PROGRAM
SEND PARTICIPANTS TO NEW PROGRAM
MAINTAIN FEEDBACK

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

VISITATION REPORTS

SCHOOLS

Forest View High School
Young Adult Program
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Futures Unlimited
Decatur, Illinois

Livingston County Alternative School
Pontiac, Illinois

Storefront School
Urbana, Illinois

Wenz School
Paris, Illinois

Five alternative schools were contacted for information regarding their programs and the manner in which they interact with the employment and training community. The schools were selected on the basis of size (small, medium, and large), geographical location (rural, urban, and suburban), and length of operation (less than three years, three through seven years, and over seven years). Four of the five schools were visited and interviews were held with the program director and some staff members and classes were observed in session. . An interview with the director and a staff member of the fifth school was conducted while they were visiting one of the other alternative schools

Information obtained about the schools was organized in the following categories:

School Information

Curriculum

Relationship to the Employment and Training Community

Possible Interactions with the Local Employment and Training Agency

The levels of interaction with the local employment and training agency varied from no present or anticipated interactions at a large, suburban alternative school to a close working relationship between a medium sized, urban alternative program and the local CETA Prime Sponsor. Overall, however, there was little or no interaction between the alternative school and the local employment and training agency. In most situations the alternative school personnel viewed their mission as an

academic oriented one, helping students earn a high school diploma. They indicated little relationship between their mission and their perceived view of the local employment and training agency's mission.

SCHOOL NAME:	Forest View High School Young Adult Program School District 214
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	2121 Goebbert Road Arlington Heights, Illinois
ADMINISTRATOR:	
NAME:	Joe Marchese
TITLE:	Program Director
ENROLLMENT:	1980-81
TOTAL =	104
Male =	56
Female =	48
AGE OF STUDENTS:	17 - 19 years
HOURS OF OPERATION:	6:30 - 9:30 pm, Monday-Thursday
MONTHS OF OPERATION:	Year round. Operates four eight-week quarters and one six-week summmer session of cooperative work training
TYPE OF CREDENTIAL OFFERED:	High school diploma
HOW EARNED:	Credits granted on a quarter basis Three hours a week - 27 hours per quarter = one credit
PURPOSE:	Complete high school and get a job

OBJECTIVES:

Help students formulate a career goal

Provide basic education in a small less structured, informal atmosphere

Place responsibility for education on the student

Prepare students to become more productive citizens who will achieve a great degree of personal fulfillment and success

HOW IS THE SCHOOL ADMINISTERED?

Under the Division of Pupil Personnel Services at the high school

The high school principal has the final authority at the school level, the superintendent at the district level

HOW IS IT OPERATED?

STAFF:

1 director, 2 cooperative work training coordinators, 1 secretary, 1 outreach counselor, 17 full- and part-time teachers

FINANCES:

Separate from school budget but also submitted to central office, no additional student fees

CURRICULUM:

Meet same requirements as any other student in the district

Elective offerings equal to day school electives

Also has individualized programs for special courses

Cooperative Work Training - has a related seminar class. Twenty hours or more of work per week earns credit

American Problems
Art
Auto Mechanics
Biology
Clerical
Communication Skills

CURRICULUM:

- Consumer Education
- Cooperative Work Training Seminar
- Counseling Services
- Creative Writing
- Drafting
- English Skills and Basic Reading and Writing
- Introduction to Theatre
- Machine Tool
- Math
- Office Machines
- Oral Communication
- Physical Science
- Psychology
- Reading
- Social Science Seminar
- Sociology
- U.S. History

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO ISBE AND OTHER AGENCIES?

Funding is from ISBE/DAVTE and regular state reimbursement

Reporting is like for any other program

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL WORK WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY? WHAT MIGHT IT OFFER TO UNEMPLOYED YOUTH?

Have CETA participants in less than class size training

Develop contracts with area vocational centers

Enroll non high school graduates 17 years of age and older in vocational courses within the program

Enroll non high school graduates 17 years of age and older in cooperative work training and earn credit for working

Gear individualized programs to individual student employment and training needs

HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS MET?

Individualized program in many subject areas

Develop a staff team using an individual education plan consisting of the student, LD teachers, and part-time staff

WHAT IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE A JOB BUT WANTS ONE?

Make contacts with local businesses to help students get jobs

List jobs on a bulletin board

Have outreach counselors help identify jobs

Not as much placement as a day cooperative work training program

HOW COULD EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM OPPERATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOLS?

Contact the program director through the principal or director of pupil personnel services

SCHOOL NAME:	Futures Unlimited
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	1401 East Eldorado Decatur, Illinois
ADMINISTRATOR:	
NAME:	Mary Adkins
TITLE:	Director
ENROLLMENT:	
TOTAL =	20
Male =	11
Female =	9
AGE OF STUDENTS:	16 - 21 years old, average is 18
HOURS OF OPERATION:	9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday
MONTHS OF OPERATION:	Year round
TYPE OF CREDENTIAL OFFERED:	High school credit
HOW EARNED:	Can earn four high school credits Three hours per day x five days a week x three months = one credit
PURPOSE:	Began as GED completion program but changed to offering up to four hours of high school credit so students could return to high school or graduate from the alternative school

OBJECTIVES:

- Help students earn high school credit
- Help students complete a high school diploma
- Help students learn job seeking and preparation skills
- Help students find part time jobs
- Help students learn in an individualized situation

HOW IS THE SCHOOL ADMINISTERED?

The school is administered by the Regional Superintendent's Office. Classes are held in that office location

HOW IS IT OPERATED?

STAFF: 1 director, 1 teacher, 1 teacher's aide, and 1 CETA counselor

FINANCES: CETA pays tuition for the clients (usually three fourths of total students). Local high school districts pay tuition for non CETA clients.

CURRICULUM:

- Academic subjects such as English, social studies, and math
- Group counseling sessions to work on personal and job related problems
- Survival skills, job information, and developing manners
- Job obtaining and retraining skills
- Work Experience Program

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO ISBE AND OTHER AGENCIES?

No present relationship with ISBE. Close working relationship with local CETA Prime Sponsor and local county high schools

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL WORK WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY? WHAT MIGHT IT OFFER TO UNEMPLOYED YOUTH?

This alternative school has a very close working relationship with the local CETA Prime Sponsor's office. CETA performs the following functions for the school:

Helps select and screen students

Counsels students on an individual and group basis

Helps students find part-time jobs

Pays students a stipend while attending classes

Evaluates student progress on a regular basis

Helps teach some of the job oriented classes

The CETA Prime Sponsor has assigned a staff members as a liaison with the alternative school director. They work closely together on a regular basis. The liaison person is very involved with the curriculum, the student's progress in the school and the work experience component of the educational program.

HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS MET?

Classes are small (10-12 students) with a great deal of individualized help. Individual, personal counseling is also provided to students.

WHAT IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE A JOB BUT WANTS ONE?

The local CETA Prime Sponsor liaison person is very involved in helping students find part time jobs.

HOW COULD EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM OPERATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL?

Contact originates with a member of the Regional Superintendent's staff. An assistant superintendent is directly responsible for the administration of the alternative school.

Continuing contact is then maintained between the school's director and the Prime Sponsor's liaison.

WHAT PROBLEMS MIGHT EXIST IN WORKING TOGETHER?

This alternative school appears to have an excellent working relationship with the local Prime Sponsor. The Regional Superintendent's Office and the Prime Sponsor have made a commitment to working together to help young people earn high school credit toward graduation and obtain job skills and part time employment.

SCHOOL NAME:	Livingston County Alternative School
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	212 North Ladd Pontiac, Illinois
ADMINISTRATOR:	
NAME:	James Stapleton
TITLE:	Director
ENROLLMENT:	
TOTAL =	16 students per semester
Male =	9
Female =	7
AGE OF STUDENTS:	16 - 21 years old, average is 19
HOURS OF OPERATION:	9:00 am - 3:00 pm, Monday-Friday
MONTHS OF OPERATION:	September - May
TYPE OF CREDENTIAL OFFERED:	Offers preparation for the GED, it offers primarily noncredit type courses
HOW EARNED:	Not applicable
PURPOSE:	Help students obtain a GED certificate and learn some survival skills
OBJECTIVES:	Prepare students for the GED test
	Help students obtain survival skills

OBJECTIVES:

Help students learn consumer economics skills

Provide job related information to students

Help students learn job seeking and retraining skills

Provide individual and group counseling to students

HOW IS THE SCHOOL ADMINISTERED?

The school if administered by the Regional Superintendent's Office. The director of the school reports to an assistant superintendent.

HOW IS IT OPERATED?

STAFF: 1 director, 1 teacher, and 1 teacher's aide

FINANCES: Tuition is paid by the local high schools including the local correctional facility

CURRICULUM: Academic subjects toward preparation for the GED test

Survival Skills

Job Seeking Skills

Consumer Economics

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO ISBE AND OTHER AGENCIES?

No relationship with ISBE. Has a close working relationship with local high schools, the Regional Superintendent's Office and local CETA Prime Sponsor.

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL WORK WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY? WHAT MIGHT IT OFFER UNEMPLOYED YOUTH?

The school works with the local CETA Office in identifying and taking in CETA eligible clients. Most students are receiving stipends from CETA for attending class and CETA provides counseling services for their client/students.

HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS MET?

Most classes are very small and while students follow a common, prescribed curriculum there is individual help and attention given to each student.

WHAT IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE A JOB BUT WANTS ONE?

This alternative school does not have a job experience component as part of its program.

HOW COULD EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM OPERATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL

Contact is made by the local CETA Office with the Regional Superintendent's Office whiich administers the program at this school. An assistant superintendent works with the CETA Prime Sponsor.

WHAT PROBLEMS MIGHT EXIST IN WORKING TOGETHER?

Since this school has primarily a GED preparation program, the services it can provide a prime sponsor appears limited. No direct job related skills appear to be offered by the school.

SCHOOL NAME:	Storefront School
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	206 West Main Urbana, Illinois
ADMINISTRATOR:	Urbana Adult Education/District 116
NAME:	John Garth and Sandy Wolf
TITLE:	Director and Secretary/Coordinator
ENROLLMENT:	
TOTAL =	65 (45 - 50 summer)
Male =	33
Female =	32
AGE OF STUDENTS:	16 - 21 years old, average is 18
HOURS OF OPERATION:	8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday
MONTHS OF OPERATION:	Year round - open entry, open exit
TYPE OF CREDENTIAL OFFERED:	Credit - graduation from sending district
HOW EARNED:	Two hours per day x five days a week x four months = one credit
PURPOSE:	Allow students to earn high school credit in an alternative or nontraditional setting
OBJECTIVES:	Help students earn high school credit
	Help students earn high school diploma

OBJECTIVES: Help students reintegrate into the regular high school program

Communicate with cooperative high school districts to help students complete a high school diploma program

HOW IS THE SCHOOL ADMINISTERED?

By Urbana Adult Education, under the Urbana School District

Average daily attendance for Urbana and Champaign students through the Urbana District to Adult Education

HOW IS IT OPERATED?

STAFF: Four teachers who work six hours per day and one secretary/coordinator

FINANCES: Separate budget under Adult Education in Urbana School District

CURRICULUM: Offers the required courses of the Champaign and Urbana schools. Electives are based on teacher speciality. For example, English, social studies, math and science, accounting/record keeping

Work Experience Program - work 300 hours for one unit of credit. Students get their own jobs and then a training agreement is developed with the employer. The teacher visits the employer during the experience and students also write up reports

The program is individualized and tutored. Each student has a contract for each course they take. Some students do their general subjects at the alternative school and vocational courses through adult education or the community college

Preemployment skills are done on an informal basis. The curriculum also includes business, home economics, and consumer economic courses. Some of the subjects are presented on PLATO through computer based instruction.

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO ISBE AND OTHER AGENCIES?

No relationship

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL WORK WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY? WHAT MIGHT IT OFFER UNEMPLOYED YOUTH?

No arrangements beyond one student in a less than class size training situation to date

This school could provide academic subject education leading to a high school diploma and a work experience for credit program

Individual contracts can be developed to meet individual student needs

HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS MET?

Personal interview at the first meeting. Student's transcript is studied. Contact is made with the local school which might confer the diploma to determine what ought to be in the individual contract. Students then begin working on an individual basis. When course is completed, the contract is sent to the local school with the grade and the local school puts it on the student's transcript.

An intake form is filled out and tests are given to the student upon enrollment in the alternative school.

WHAT IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE A JOB BUT WANTS ONE?

Must get their own job but they get personal attention to prepare for the job seeking process. If they do get a job, they can sign up for work experience credit.

Teachers go to place of employment after the students have started to sign an agreement with the student's employer (training agreement).

HOW COULD EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM OPERATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL?

Deal directly with the administration of the center on any day because of open entry, individualized program.

Students can be enrolled directly into the alternative school even if they never attended the local high school. They must meet local high school requirements and will graduate from the local high school.

Approximately half of the students are referrals from high school counselors

WHAT PROBLEMS MIGHT EXIST IN WORKING TOGETHER?

Some high school districts will only accept one credit from the alternative school for graduation

Students must have a fourth grade reading level to enter

Takes a longer amount of time than the regular school to complete the diploma

There has been little contact with local CETA operation

SCHOOL NAME:	Wenz School
SCHOOL ADDRESS:	Paris, Illinois
ADMINISTRATOR:	
NAME:	Larry Evlon
TITLE:	Assistant Principal
ENROLLMENT:	
TOTAL =	30
Male =	17
Female =	13
AGE OF STUDENTS:	Average age is 15
HOURS OF OPERATION:	8:00 am - 2:30 pm
MONTHS OF OPERATION:	September - May (regular school year)
TYPE OF CREDENTIAL OFFERED:	Credits
HOW EARNED:	Two hours per day x five day a week = one credit per semester
PURPOSE:	Work with potential dropouts below the age of 16 to keep them in school
OBJECTIVES:	Offer an alternative education program to potential high school dropouts under the age of 16 Offer the program within the regular high school building during the school day

OBJECTIVES:

Maintain a self-contained classroom with a small number of students in class

Provide a great deal of individual attention to each student

Prepare those students for the GED exam who were not interested in finishing high school

HOW IS THE SCHOOL ADMINISTERED?

The school is run as a program offered by the Paris High School. It is administered by the assistant principal who also serves as director of the alternative school.

HOW IS IT OPERATED?

STAFF: One half time administrator, 2 full-time teachers, and 1 teacher's aide

FINANCES: Operated out of the regular high school budget

CURRICULUM: Stress academic subjects offered in the regular high school program

Individual work for some students to prepare for GED exam

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO ISBE AND OTHER AGENCIES?

No direct relationship to ISBE, other schools in area, or local CETA Office

HOW MIGHT THE SCHOOL WORK WITH THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMUNITY? WHAT MIGHT IT OFFER UNEMPLOYED YOUTH?

Had no working relationship with the employment and training community. Could do some GED preparation for CETA clients and also some limited vocational training in some of the regular high school vocational courses.

HOW ARE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS MET?

A great deal of small group instruction and some individualized instruction. Students wanting vocational subjects are put in classes with regular high school students.

WHAT IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT HAVE A JOB BUT WANTS ONE?

No relationship to a job in this program.

HOW COULD EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM OPERATORS MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL?

Contact should be made with the assistant principal or the principal of the high school.

WHAT PROBLEMS MIGHT EXIST IN WORKING TOGETHER?

This school works with younger students before they become dropouts. The program is also limited in scope, facilities, and time since it is run as a part of the regular high school program.

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